Procurement of fooagrains

*42. MISS MABEL REBELLO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION"be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that monopolization of procurement of foodgrains by Central and State agencies has institutionalized inefficiency;

(b) if so, what measures Government plan to take to reduce inefficiency in this sector; and

(c) to what extent the consumers would be benefited from these measures?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) Under the Government Policy on procurement of foodgrains, the private sector is also free to procure foodgrains from the farmers at or above the Minimum Support Price (MSP). The Government announces the MSP for the farmers every crop year so as to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers, prevent distress sale and to have sufficient buffer stocks for a sound' Public Distribution System (PDS). Farmers have the freedom to offer their produce to public or private agencies. The participation of Government agencies in the procurement of foodgrains has, over the years, led to the successful implementation of the MSP operations in the country.

(b) To further improve efficiency in the procurement operations by Government agencies, a number of measures have been taken, which, *inter-alia,* aim at reducing the carrying cot of foodgrains, including the transit losses.

(c) The Central Issue Price of foodgrains for BPL families has remained unchanged since July, 2000 and the consumers under the BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana are getting foodgrains at pre-determined subsidized prices only.

Controversy over location of UCIL

*43. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :